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Identifiers-Latin Achievement Test

A College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB)-sponsored survey presents data derived from the questionnaire responses of a representative sample of 1,814 secondary school seniors who took the CEEB Latin Achievement Test during the 1965-66 academic year. Written analyses of questionnaire data, along with many supporting graphs and charts, offer information on the survey group, the language course background of the candidates, the details of the first year of Latin study, and the nature of the classroom activities in Grades 7 through 12. Brief concluding remarks precede two appendixes comprised of a full listing of classroom activities and a description of the survey design and administration. For a related document see FL 001 332. (AF)

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TEST DEVELOPMENT REPORT
TDR-69-1 JANUARY 1969

A Survey of the Teaching of Latin in Secondary Schools

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Test Development Division, ETS

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Preface

Probably more changes have occurred in secondary school curriculums during the past ten years than in any previous decade in our nation's history. The impact of these changes on the academic preparation of college-bound students is of concern to the College Entrance Examination Board, which prepares achievement tests for college admissions programs. To obtain factual information on what individuals actually study in high school, the College Entrance Examination Board supported a survey of about 38,000 students who took College Board achievement tests during the 1965-66 academic year. These students represented more than 7,500 secondary schools throughout the United States.

Before the survey was initiated, the question of whether or not students both could and would give valid accounts of their educational experiences was investigated. The results of this feasibility study, which was conducted in about 50 high schools for seniors studying French and chemistry, showed a satisfactorily high agreement between teachers' and students' responses to the same questions. As might be expected, agreement was highest in the most recent grades. However, even as far back as grade 9, there was a mean student-teacher agreement of 70%. In the case of highly factual questions, percentages ranged from 90 to 100%. Interviews carried on in a selected sample of these 50 schools showed that student responses to questions that were unambiguous in meaning were valid even in the case of recall over three and four years.

At the onset, these data were to be used only for developing better achievement tests. However, as the study progressed, their potential usefulness to a wider audience of educators became more apparent. The fact that College Board achievement tests are taken by only a fraction of college entrants is an inherent limitation in the use of these data. However, extensive information such as that collected for this study is highly relevant to many current issues in secondary education.

Consequently, Educational Testing Service is publishing these results in a series of eight reports, one in each of the following subjects: English, history, biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, Latin, and modern foreign languages (French, German, and Spanish). The author of each of these reports is an examiner in the subject field in the Test Development Division of Educational Testing Service. Special consultants assisted these authors in identifying the findings in each field that would be of the greatest importance and interest to the educational community. Details of the study design and administration appear in an appendix to this report.

Elizabeth W. Haven
Project Director

Acknowledgments

It would be practically impossible to cite all of those who contributed to this project. However, special commendation should be given to the thousands of students who took time from their busy schedules to complete the lengthy and complicated questionnaires, and to the high school principals who encouraged the students to participate in this research.

The author wishes to express his appreciation to Mr. Richard T. Scanlan, Department of Classics, University of Illinois, who served as special consultant in the writing of this report.

A Survey of the Teaching of Latin in Secondary Schools

Introduction

The Latin candidate survey indicated that Latin is still being taught to most students through what is generally known as a "traditional" or "grammar-translation" approach. This finding, however, is no doubt a reflection of two factors: the first is that the survey was conducted just when the major linguistic or structural textbooks were being published. The second is the probability that rigid demarcations between the two camps are now rapidly breaking down--oral Latin question-and-answer techniques and "pattern practices" are gaining wider acceptance among the so-called traditionalists, [1] and the structural linguists are modifying the extent of their use of spoken Latin. The survey suggests that this blending of a structural approach and grammar-oriented methodology was already beginning to occur in the period studied. And it may one day provide base data against which the results of additional studies may be compared when the full impact of the structural approach has been felt.

Description of the Survey Group

The data presented in this report were derived from the questionnaire responses of a representative sample of 1,814 secondary school seniors who took the Latin Achievement Test of the College Entrance Examination Board in the December, January, and March administrations of the academi year 1965-66.[2] Approximately three-fourths (73%) of the students invited to participate in the survey returned completed forms.

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[1] Kovach, Edith M., "Latin Curricula: Student Attitudes," the Classical Journal, December 1967 (based on the reports of 358 college freshmen at the University of Detroit who had studied Latin).

[2] The questionnaire was also administered to a sample of juniors who took the test in May 1966; results of this administration are not reported since candidates taking Achievement Tests in their junior year are atypical of the test population as a whole. That the junior test scores average much higher than those of the total Latin Achievement Test group is a significant indication of the selective nature of the junior population. Although some of the juniors are undoubtedly taking the test merely for practice, a considerable number are applicants for early admission to some of the more highly selective colleges.

As indicated in Figure 1, half of the students in the survey were attending schools in the northeastern part of the United States, with smaller proportions from the Midwest, South, and West, in that order. Three-fifths of the students were attending public schools; almost a third, Roman Catholic schools; and a much smaller proportion, independent schools. The candidate group was almost equally divided with respect to sex.

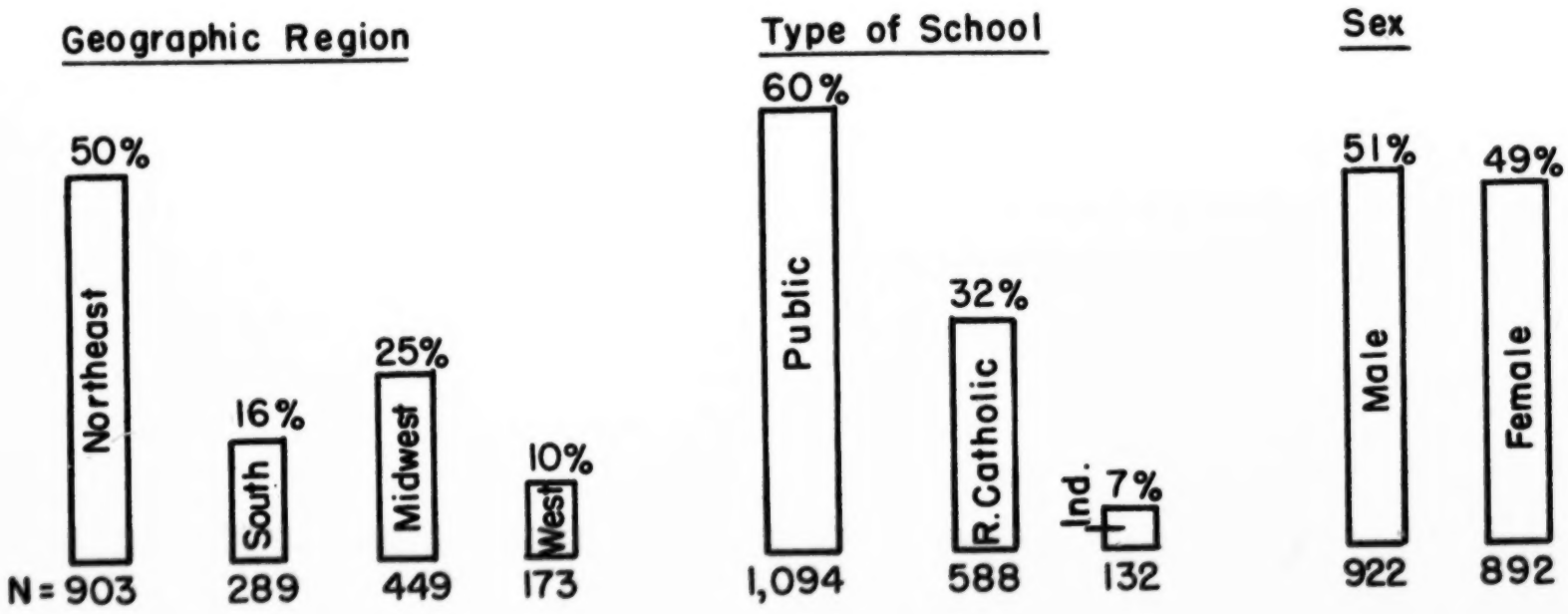

Fig. 1. Composition of Latin candidate group. Based on sample of seniors tested in December 1965, January 1966, and March 1966. Total N = 1,814.

The relatively high percentage of students from Roman Catholic schools included in the survey was intended to accord with the high proportion of Latin students found in parochial schools where the study of Latin has traditionally been obligatory. During the period when this survey was being conducted, however, language curricula in parochial schools were undergoing major revaluations, which in many archdioceses throughout the country resulted in the relegation of Latin to an elective status. This trend was reinforced by the substitution of the vernacular for Latin in the Mass. It can therefore be assumed that the proportion of students from Roman Catholic schools would probably have to be significantly decreased in future studies of the kind.

Language Course Background of the Candidates

Although the bulk of the questionnaire was devoted to instructional activities in Latin classes from the seventh through the twelfth grades, a preliminary section asked the students to identify all foreign languages they had studied from first grade through high school. In the summaries of this information in Table 1 and Figure 2 a number of the patterns that emerge are noteworthy.

French was by far the most common second language for the Latin candidates, with from three to five times as many students indicating courses in French as in Spanish from seventh grade on. In view of the fact that Spanish enrollments around the country are now comparable to those in French, this finding would seem to indicate that some of the same considerations, whatever they may be, that lead students into pursuing the study of Latin may be influencing them to choose French over other modern languages. This reasoning cannot be carried too far, however, for in some cases, the choice is not vested in the student, but rather in the school (or larger unit such as the school district, diocese, or state) in terms of which languages are offered.

It is important to observe that most of these Latin students took Latin in place of, rather than in addition to, a modern language. Even in the eleventh grade, when 25% of the candidates were studying French, less than 40% were studying a second language.

Readers may be interested to know that among the samples of seniors who responded to similar questionnaires focused on French, Spanish, and German,[3] approximately two-fifths had studied Latin in the ninth grade and only slightly smaller proportions in the tenth grade. Thus, without any attempt to analyze why this occurred, one may conclude that among College Board candidates, those who take the achievement test in Latin are less likely to have studied a particular modern language than are those who take the test in that language to have studied Latin.

Only a very small percentage of the Latin students indicated any FLES (Foreign Language in the Elementary School) or junior high school study, and those who indicated courses in these early grades were more likely to have been studying French or Spanish than Latin.

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[3] See A Survey of the Teaching of French, Spanish and German in Secondary Schools. Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey, 1969.

Table 1

Latin Candidates' Background of Courses in Other Languages

Percentages of Senior Respondents Reporting Study of a Language at Given Grade Level.

Language Studied	1st through 6th[a]	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
French	7%	9%	11%	13%	23%	25%	19%
Spanish	5	3	4	3	5	5	5
German					2	3	3
Greek (Classical)						2	2

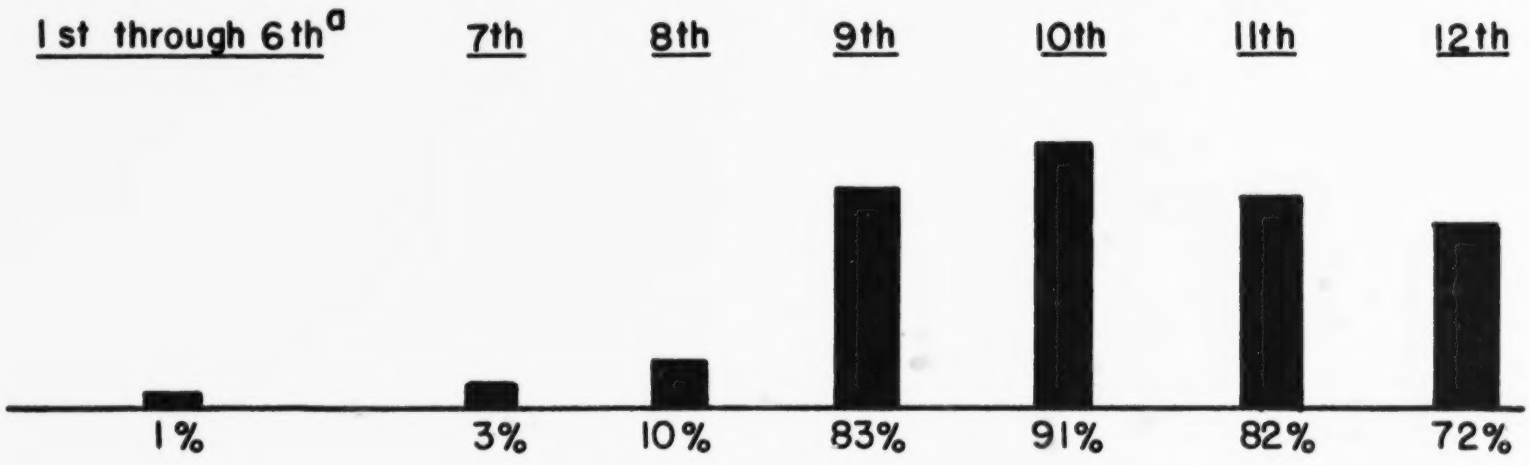
[a]Percentages indicate study of the foreign language in at least one of the six elementary grades.

NOTE: Percentages which did not exceed 2.0 are not shown. Additional languages reported at one grade level or more with frequencies of less than 2 percent included Czech, Italian, Polish, Russian, Swedish, Hebrew, Chinese, and Japanese.

Figure 2

Latin Candidates' Background of Courses in Latin

Percentages of Senior Respondents Reporting Study of Latin at Given Grade Level.



[a]Percentages indicate study of Latin in at least one of the six elementary grades.

A small but significant percentage of the group began Latin in the eighth grade, as indicated by the jump from 3% to 10% between the seventh and eighth grades. The great majority took their first course in the ninth grade. The peak grade for the study of Latin was the tenth, with declines of about 10% in the eleventh and twelfth grades. The data indicate that a significant minority of the candidate group dropped Latin after a two-year sequence ending in the tenth or the eleventh grade, or after a three-year sequence ending in the eleventh grade. A considerable number of the candidates, therefore, were not pursuing a regular course in Latin during the twelfth grade, the school year in which they took the test.

In connection with the limited number of candidates reporting Latin study prior to the ninth grade or the study of more than one foreign language, it is well to recall very briefly a few of the factors contributing to this circumstance. The period spanned by this survey was one in which not only FLES but even junior high foreign language study were still widely regarded as innovative. Where a language program was offered at these levels, limited finances and a lack of qualified teachers frequently restricted the courses to a single language, usually French and seldom Latin. Many of the students who took these courses were then urged by guidance counselors to continue studying the language that they had begun. Moreover, it was difficult if not impossible for most to fit an additional language into their high school programs which consisted largely of compulsory courses in mathematics, history, English, and the sciences. For those students who began their foreign language study in the ninth grade and selected Latin, the opportunity to take a modern language in addition and to study it for the recommended two-year minimum was severely limited. Poor articulation between elementary, junior, and senior high schools, not to mention the ever-present debate on the value of studying Latin or the modern foreign languages, added to the problems that confronted the student who might have wished to begin Latin at an early grade or to study it along with a modern language.

Many signs now point to a gradual improvement in this area. Perhaps most characteristic of the brightening prospects for Latin FLES are the large-scale programs now in progress in such cities as Philadelphia, Cleveland, Detroit, and Washington, D. C. [4]

The revival of classical Greek in the secondary school, undoubtedly hoped for by many Latinists, is not suggested by the survey data, which indicate only 2% of the students as having taken courses in classical Greek in the eleventh or twelfth grades. However, recent marked increases in college Greek enrollments have resulted in the reappearance of classics majors and a renewal of departments of classics in several institutions across the nation. It is not unreasonable to speculate that within the next decade or two these developments will stimulate a significant increase in regular secondary school courses in Greek. Several innovative programs have already been established in the few years following the conduct of this survey. One example is the Cleveland Archdiocesan Greek Saturday Program sponsored by Father Gardocki, in which 35 students under two teachers are enrolled at three centers.[5]

The remaining sections of this report will be devoted to the students' responses to questions concerning their first-year study of Latin and their classroom activities from grade 7 through grade 12.

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[4]Cleveland: Catholic Universe Bulletin, May 1967 on Diocesan Latin Program headed by Henry A. Gardocki, S. J.

Detroit: Latin Heritage course sponsored by Mrs. Eula Cutt. See H. Hayden, "In the Schools," The Classical World, Vol. 61, No. 5, Jan. 1968; Kovach, E., "Ten Master Teacher and Program Award Programs," The Classical World, Vol. 60 (1966-67) 39; H. Hayden, "Classics in the Inner City School--Experiments and Proposals," The Classical World, Vol. 60 (1966-67) 96.

Philadelphia: Masciantonio, R., See The Classical Outlook, Vol. 45, Feb. 1968, p.1 ff.; The Classical World, Vol. 61, No. 5,Jan. 1968, p. 178.

Washington D.C.: See The Classical World, Vol. 61, No.5, Jan. 1968, p. 178 ff.; H. Hayden, The Classical World, Vol. 60, No. 3, Nov. 1966, p. 93 ff.; J. Le Bovit, "Qui Timide Rogat, Docet Nogare," The Classical World, Vol. 61, No. 2, Oct. 1967, p. 37 ff.

[5]Also in this connection note the article by J. B. Shriver entitled "Why Not Teach Greek?" which appeared in a 1966 issue of The Arch, a publication of the Georgian Education Association.

It should be pointed out that for preliminary analyses of the response data, the total sample of senior students was subdivided according to both geographical region and type of school--public, Roman Catholic, and independent. Although no statistical tests of significance were performed, careful comparisons of the response patterns revealed that neither of these factors had an appreciable effect on the first-year instructional techniques encountered by the students or on the frequencies which they reported for the various classroom activities in grades 7 through 12. These breakdowns of the data have therefore not been indicated in the report. However, the extremely high correlations observed in the response patterns of both the geographical and type-of-school subgroups might well be regarded as one of the more significant findings from the survey.

First-year Latin Study

Although the analysis of most of the response data concerning instructional activities was more conveniently organized in terms of grade level rather than language level (first year, second year, etc.), one section of the questionnaire specifically requested information about the students' first-year Latin training. The questions in this section of the survey focused on three aspects of the instructional process: the extent to which students received their initial introduction to Latin through the spoken language, the type of approach followed by their teacher in presenting the basic grammatical structure of Latin, and the nature of their homework assignments during the first year.

The committee that guided the development of the questionnaires attempted in this section to assess the impact of the structural methodologies upon Latin instruction at the elementary level. For if indeed a significant proportion of College Board Latin candidates, whose training spanned the first half of the sixties, and in some cases the late fifties had been exposed to some of the newer instructional techniques, it would be reasonable to expect this to be most clearly evident in their beginning course, where the differences among the various methodologies are sharpest. There were, of course, certain difficulties inherent in attempting operational definitions that distinguished the so-called structural and grammar-translation approaches and that would not offend a majority of the proponents of both. The investigator decided, therefore, that it was fitting to

present verbatim from the questionnaire the most relevant questions together with full tabulations of the student responses.

Introduction to the Study of Latin

Slightly less than half of the students indicated that their teachers had them listen to and pronounce Latin before their instruction in reading and writing the language began. For about two-thirds of these students this initial period devoted exclusively to pronouncing and listening to Latin lasted less than one week; for most of the remainder, a period of one to three weeks elapsed before they began to use printed material.

Approach to Grammar

The two key questions and the distributions of student responses were as follows:

Which of these statements best describes your study of Latin forms in your first year of instruction in Latin?

	Distribution of Responses
A. Learned declensions (e.g., porta, portae, portae) and conjugations (e.g., amo, amas, amat) first and then used them in sentences	85%
B. Looked at or studied Latin sentences first and then from the various usages contructed declensions and conjugations	13%
C. Never studied or memorized declensions or conjugations	less than 1%
D. Do not remember	1%

Which of these statements best describes how you learned rules of Latin grammar in your first year of instruction in Latin?

A. Learned principles and rules, then practiced their application	76%
B. Looked at or studied, at least briefly, correct sentences and phrases, then developed the principles and rules of grammar they demonstrated	17%
C. Did not formally study principles and rules of grammar	5%
D. Do not remember	3%

Homework Assignments

Not surprisingly, over 99% of the students indicated that they were given homework during their first year of Latin study. Of these, three-fourths responded that assignments requiring reading in Latin were given at, or almost at, the start of the course. Only 5% of the students reported the use of tapes or records as often as three or four times in the course of their first year of Latin.

One special question in the section on first-year Latin study explored the current status of the macron. The candidate group indicated their experience with the famous, or infamous, long marks as follows:

Response Alternatives	Distribution of Responses
A. They were not indicated in my text.	4%
B. The teacher did not call attention to them or teach what they meant.	7%
C. The teacher called attention to them and insisted upon their use at least in some instances, e.g., in the difference between the nominative and ablative of the first declension singular and in some verb forms.	69%
D. The teacher mentioned them but I did not learn to use them as an aid to reading Latin.	13%
E. I learned to make use of them through my own observation.	7%

Thus, for more than two-thirds of these students, the long mark did have a definite place in their Latin lives for at least that first year.

Classroom Activities in Grades 7 through 12

The major portion of the questionnaire was devoted to the relative frequency with which various types of learning activities were carried out in the Latin courses which the students had followed from seventh through twelfth grade. A total of 43 activities were presented, characteristic of instructional approaches commonly used by teachers for the development of a basic grammatical and lexical

control of Latin, reading ability, and a knowledge of Latin literature and Roman civilization and culture. For each activity, students were requested to indicate the extent of their exposure at each grade level according to the following scale:

F Frequently (at least once a week, on the average)

O Occasionally

R Rarely (a maximum of three or four times a year)

N Never

It was subsequently felt that there would be little pedagogical difference between the rare use of a certain technique and its complete omission; therefore, this distinction is not preserved in the presentation of the student response patterns.

It would be well to make a few cautionary remarks regarding the interpretation of the results of this section of the survey. First, it should be emphasized that the data presented refer to a specific sample of seniors who took the College Board Latin Achievement Test in a given academic year and not to a random sample of all the Latin students in the country. Although the Board candidates do come from all parts of the country and from all types of schools, one would anticipate considerable differences between them as a survey population and any general Latin student population in a specific school, district, state, or geographical region. Thus inferences from the Board candidate data to some other population should be made with due regard to factors that one might reasonably expect to differ in the two populations.

Second, in comparing across grade levels the responses concerning a particular classroom activity, the reader should keep in mind that for any given grade the extent of the average candidate's Latin training will not, in general, be one year greater than that at the preceding grade level. This follows from the fact that the students in the sample began their study of Latin at different grades and from the decision to organize the analysis and presentation of the student response data in terms of grade level rather than years of study. For the reader who wishes to acquaint himself with the full range of activities covered in the questionnaire, all 43 are listed in Appendix 1 in the order in which they appeared in the questionnaire. In the pages following, responses concerning most of these activities are discussed under general headings which serve as unifying themes. Graphs are also provided with the text to illustrate student response patterns for those activities judged to be of greatest significance in a particular area. Where appropriate, the response patterns for certain classroom activities are discussed and illustrated under more than one heading.

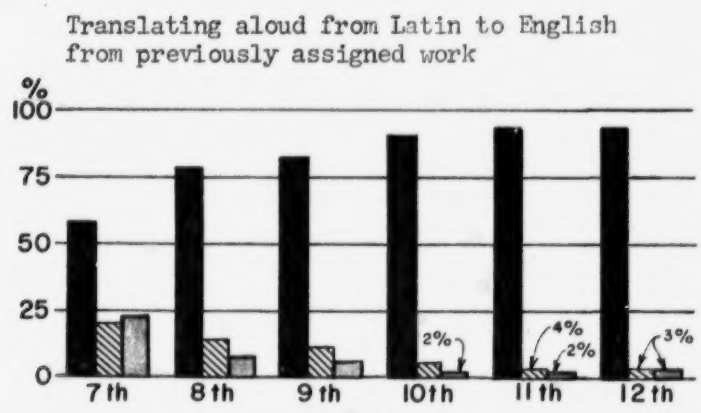
Translation

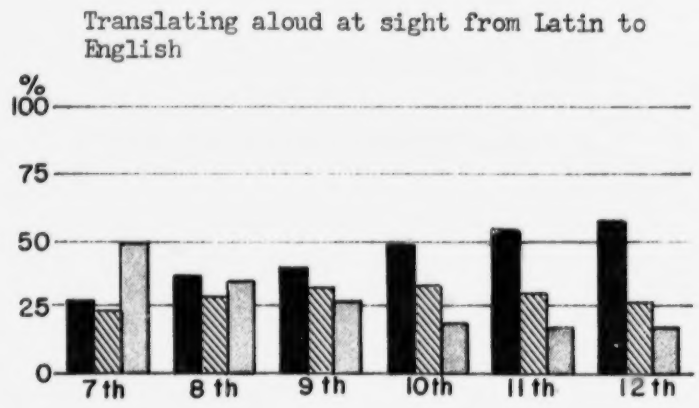
The student responses to the questions about various translation activities seem to confirm that translation from Latin to English is still the basic technique for developing ability to read Latin and that translation from English to Latin is used frequently in the early stages of instruction but less frequently as the student proceeds with his study.

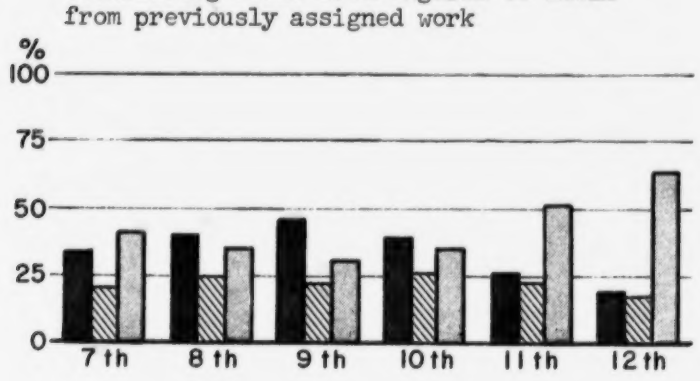
By far the most frequent was translation aloud from Latin to English of previously assigned work. The percentage of students who indicated "frequently" rose steadily by grade level and was over 90% in the upper three grades. These extremely high figures indicated that a considerable proportion of class time was probably being taken up in this activity and, by inference, that homework assignments often consisted of preparing for this type of translation in class. The steady increase across grade levels undoubtedly reflected increasing emphasis on the development of reading skill, as less and less time was devoted to the study of basic grammar.

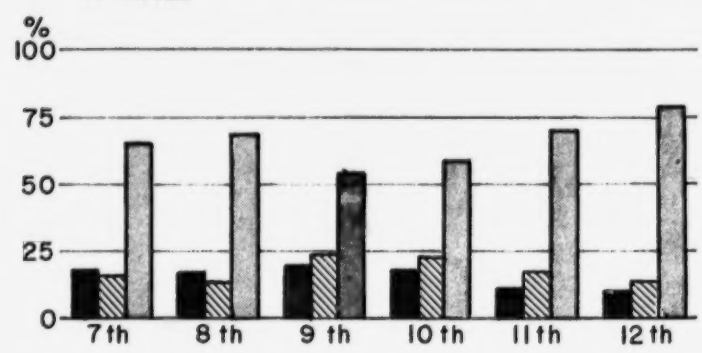
Translation aloud from Latin to English at sight also increased steadily and was indicated as a "frequent" activity by roughly half the candidates in the upper three grades.

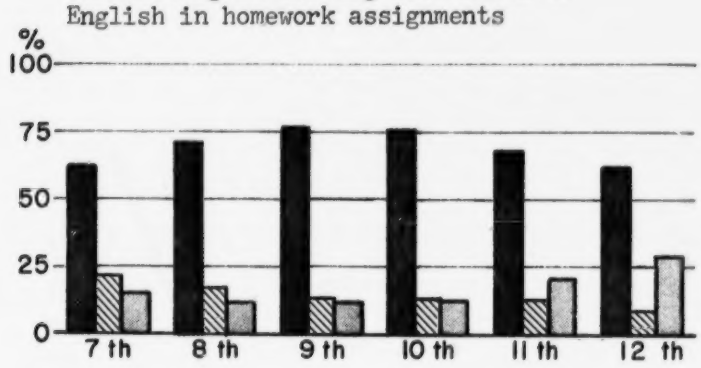
Of the various activities involving translation from English into Latin, only the preparation of written translations as homework assignments in grades 7 through 9 was indicated as "frequent" by over half of the candidates. In these grades, translations into Latin and from Latin were about equally frequent. The fact that written translation into Latin declined rapidly in the upper grades tends to substantiate the view that this activity is used primarily as a means toward developing students' knowledge of basic grammar and vocabulary, which is obviously stressed in the beginning years. On the other hand, writing translations from Latin to English declined only slightly in the upper grades, and its continued significant frequency is in accord with the view that such translation is aimed at developing reading ability.

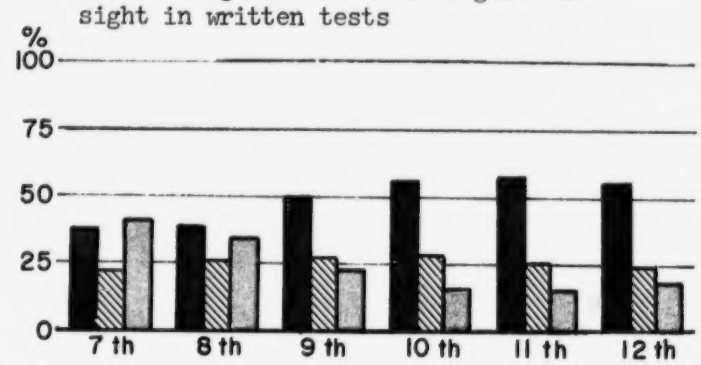


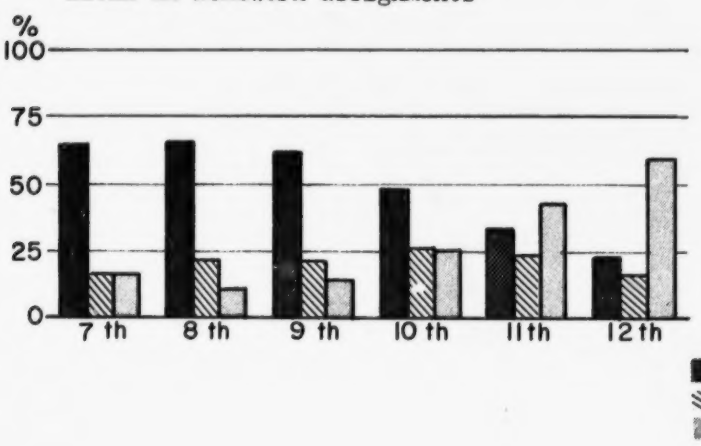












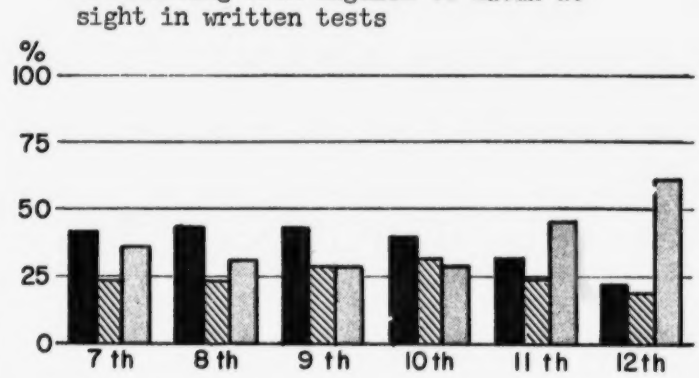
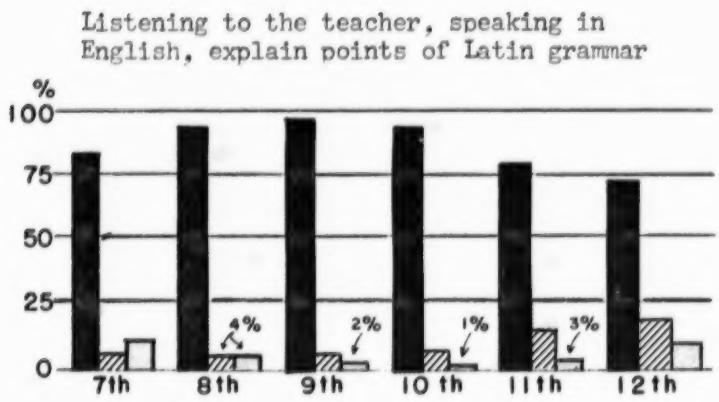


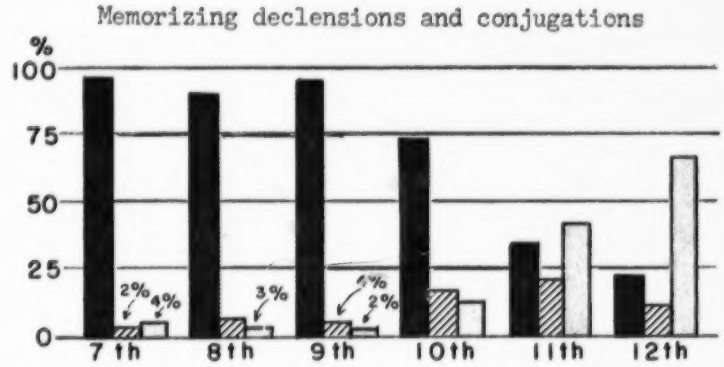
Fig. 3. Translation. Percentages based on subgroup of Latin candidates reporting study at given grade level.

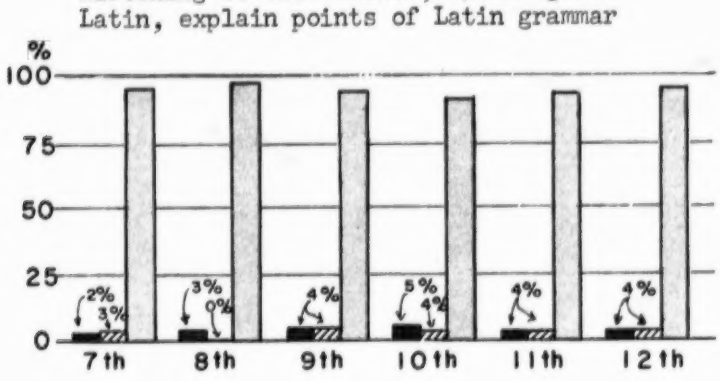
Grammar

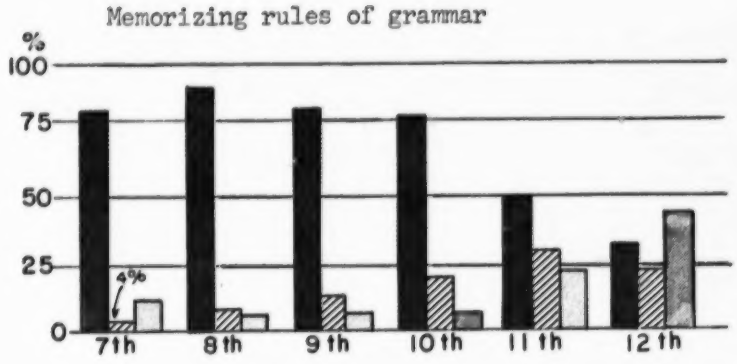
As the most intensive study of Latin structure occurs in the student's first year of instruction, the more significant findings of this survey with respect to grammar instruction are reported in the section First-year Latin Study.

One additional observation, although not remarkable in any sense, still deserves comment at this point, namely, that the great majority of students in the seventh through tenth grades were engaged frequently in memorizing declensions, conjugations, and grammatical principles. This would seem to reflect a widespread conviction among Latin teachers that conscious memorization of paradigms and grammatical rules is the most efficient way of developing effective control of Latin structure. Alternatively, it may mean that most teachers had not yet had time to consider fully the possibilities of applying linguistic theory in the Latin classroom.









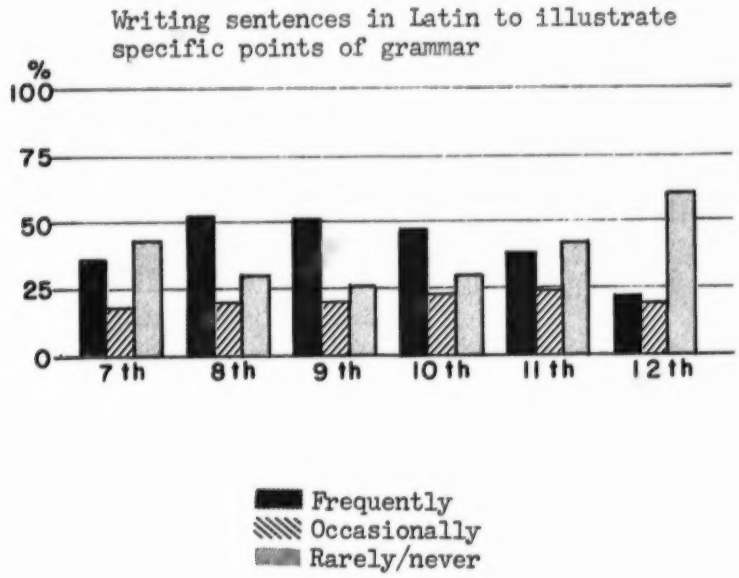


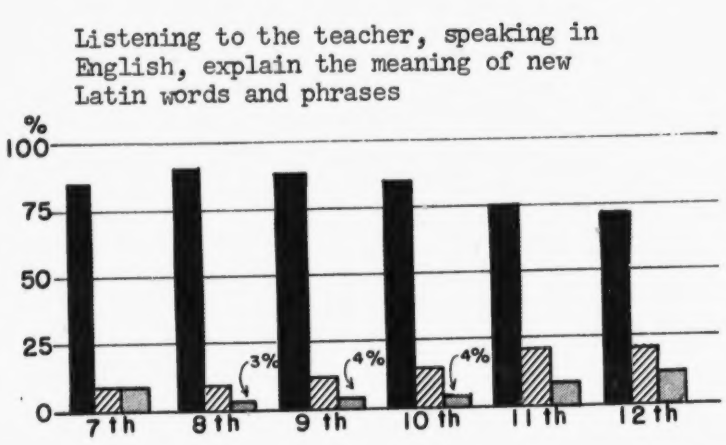
Fig. 4. Grammar. Percentages based on subgroup of Latin candidates reporting study at given grade level.

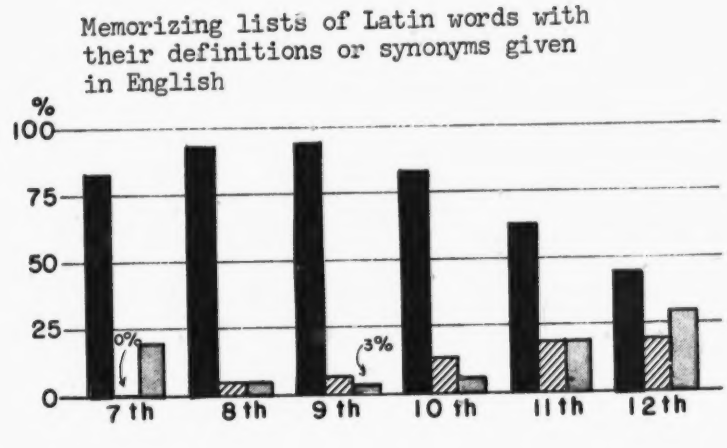
Vocabulary

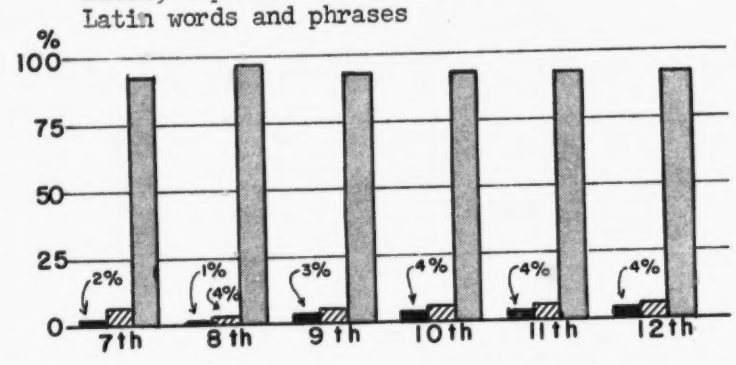
Four items in the questionnaire dealt explicitly with techniques for helping students to acquire vocabulary. Contrasting questions explored the frequency of Latin and English explanations of new words by the teacher. A second pair of questions yielded a comparison of the frequencies with which students memorized lists of words with Latin synonyms or definitions, and lists of Latin words with English equivalents.

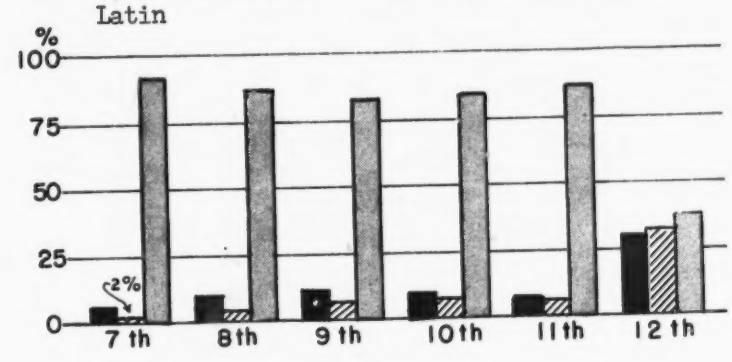
The patterns revealed by the student responses confirmed that their teachers almost invariably resorted to English in explaining the meanings of new words and to the use of Latin-English word lists. A partial deviation from this pattern occurred in the twelfth-grade responses, where over 60% of the students indicated either frequent or occasional use of word lists involving Latin definitions or synonyms. By the time students are in the twelfth grade and in third- or fourth-year courses, they have, of course, usually acquired a sufficiently extensive vocabulary to make this technique more practical.

An additional question relating to vocabulary focused on the study of the derivation of English words from their Latin roots. Such study was not indicated as "frequent" by as many as half of the students at any grade. Although these results might prove both surprising and disappointing to those convinced of the usefulness of this type of word-study, one must entertain the possibility that many students may have interpreted the question more narrowly than the questionnaire designers intended and failed to count analyses of words occurring within the framework of class translation work. It is quite possible that spontaneous work with derivatives in the context of other activities such as translation is a far more frequent occurrence than the specific lesson directed at the study of word derivations.









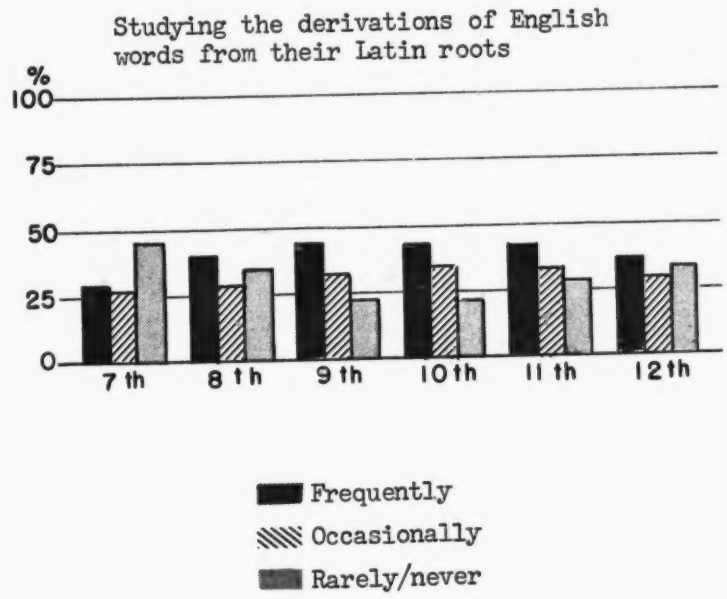


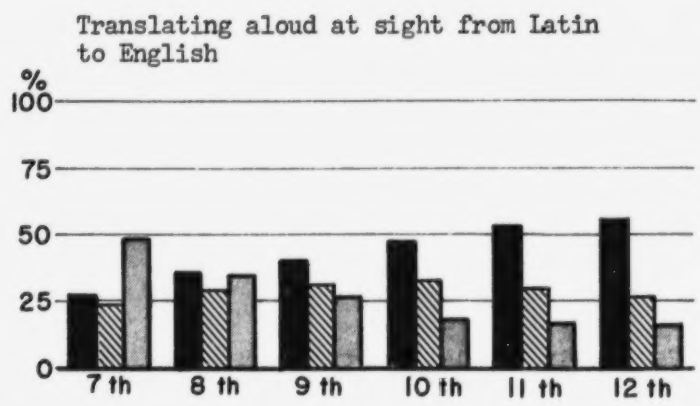
Fig. 5. Vocabulary. Percentages based on subgroup of Latin candidates reporting study at given grade level.

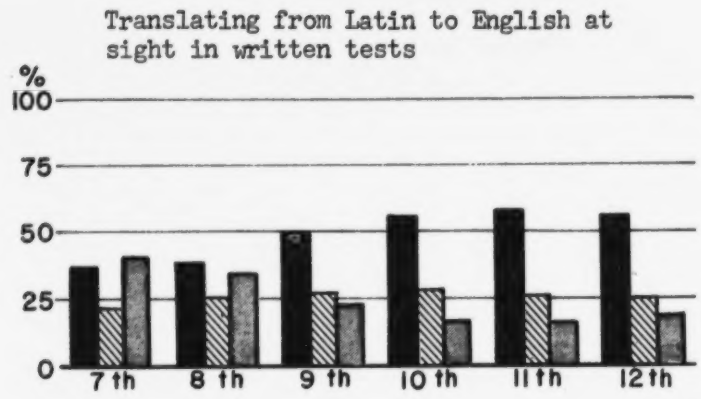
Sight Work

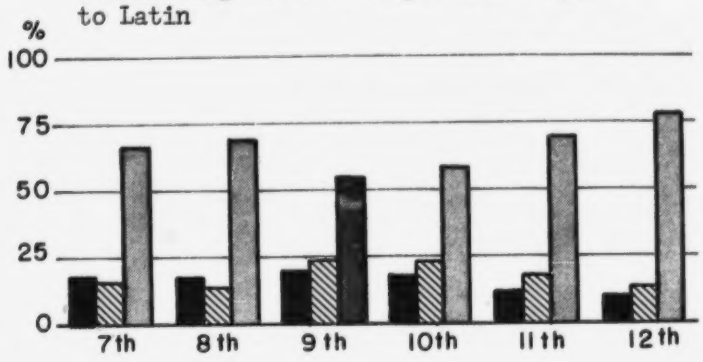
A major objective of any Latin program must be the development of students' ability to read at sight with understanding. The responses indicating very limited practice in sight translation will be discomforting to many, for translation is probably the most frequently used method for evaluating reading comprehension in Latin. Only about half the students indicated sight translation of Latin to English, both orally and in written tests, as "frequent" in the ninth through twelfth grades; close to one-fifth indicated that they rarely or never engaged in such sight work. These results lend credence to the observations made on occasion by college instructors that one of the weaker aspects of secondary school Latin instruction today is lack of emphasis on developing the ability to read moderately difficult Latin at sight.

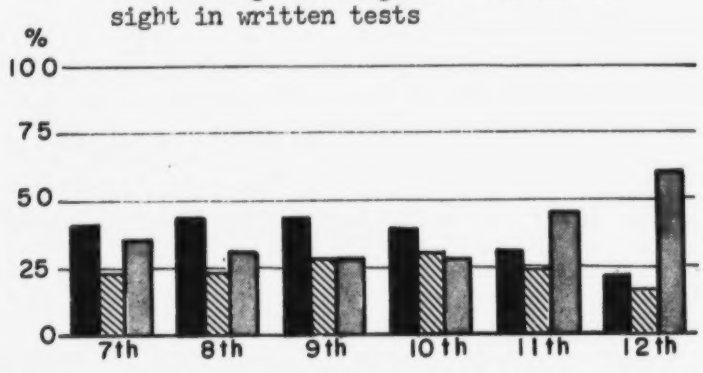
Oral and written sight translation into Latin was, as expected, considerably less frequent than from Latin into English and declined noticeably in the upper grades. It was interesting to note that in all grades twice as many students were frequently called upon to do such translations in written tests as in oral class work. If teachers regard the use of this technique favorably, they might strike a better balance between its uses for instructional and evaluative purposes.

The proportion of students called upon frequently or even occasionally to answer in Latin questions about sentences or passages read at sight in class never rose much above one-fifth at any grade. It is unfortunate that no attempt was made to assess the extent to which English questions of this type were utilized. Thus it was impossible to determine the relative frequency with which sight work was evaluated through translation and through structural or comprehension questions.









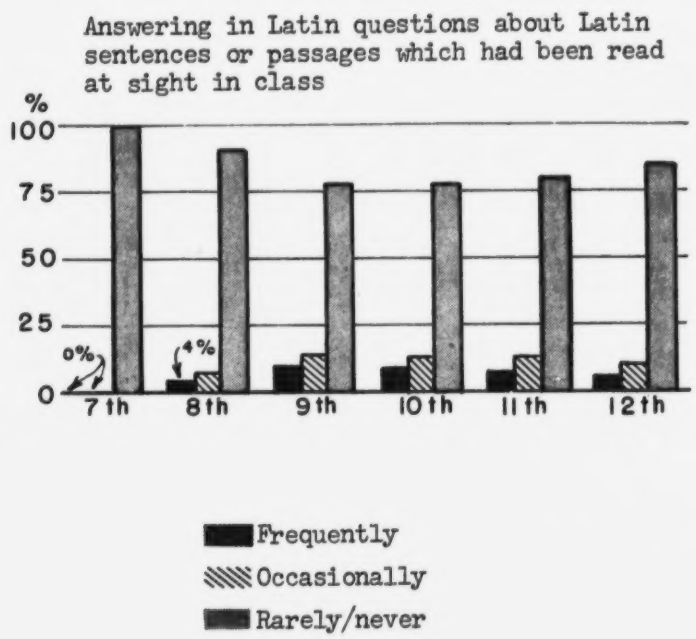


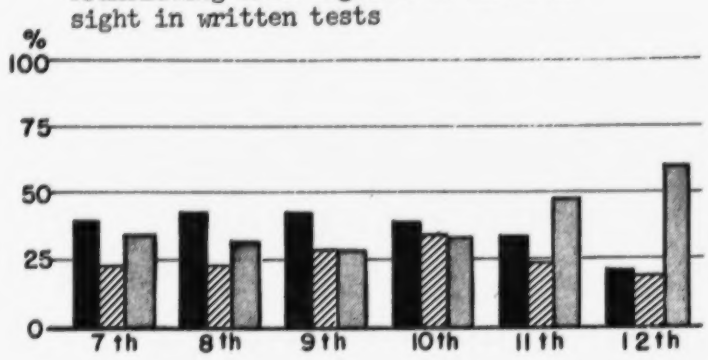
Fig. 6. Sight work. Percentages based on subgroup of Latin candidates reporting study at given grade level.

Writing

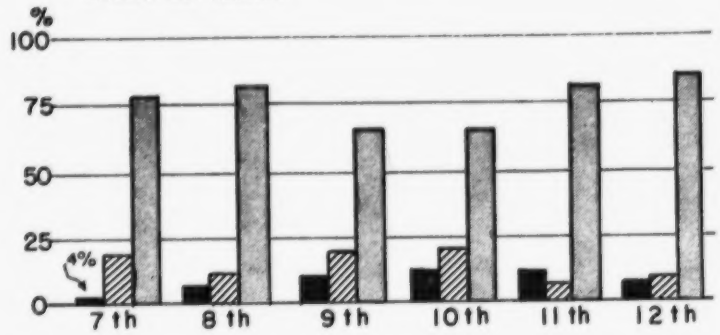
The survey gave overwhelming confirmation that the days of extended Latin prose composition are gone. Those who hope this is a temporary phenomenon may find it consoling that composition has not altogether disappeared: as many as 1 in 50 students frequently wrote compositions or summaries in Latin, and about 1 in 20 did so at least occasionally. For the great majority of students, however, the writing of Latin was confined to translation and grammar, i.e., the translation of isolated English sentences into Latin to illustrate specific grammatical points or the translation of paragraphs to demonstrate comprehension.

The scant amount of composition undoubtedly reflects a number of factors. First, there is a realization that it is usually not well suited to students who have limited experience with the language and limited vocabulary resources--who are hardly equal to expressing concepts with grammatical correctness much less finesse. Then, too, it is easy to imagine that many teachers may well shy away from assigning compositions either because of the prohibitive amount of time required for satisfactory correction, or because they feel their primary goal, reading fluency, leaves no time for less-focused activities like prose composition.

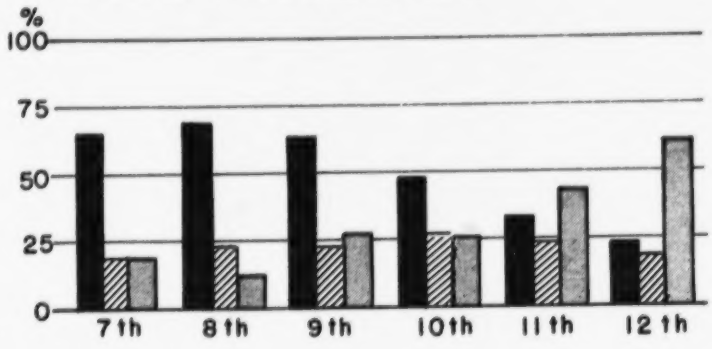
Translating from English to Latin at sight in written tests



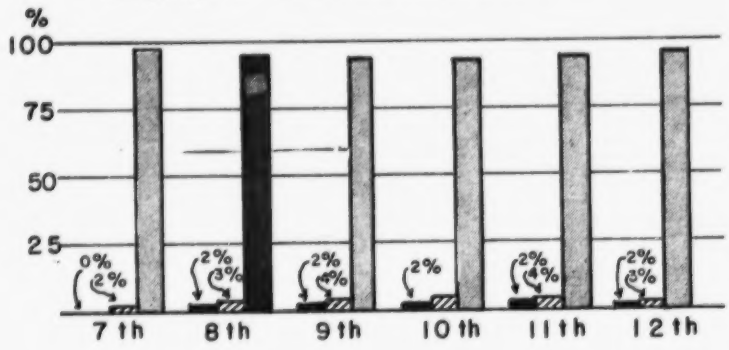
Writing in Latin answers to questions in Latin on tests



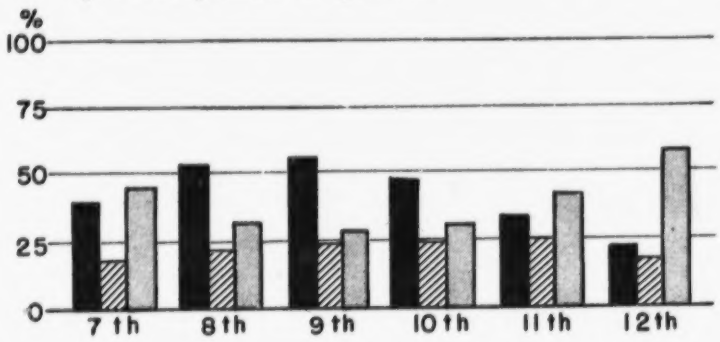
Translating in writing from English to Latin in homework assignments



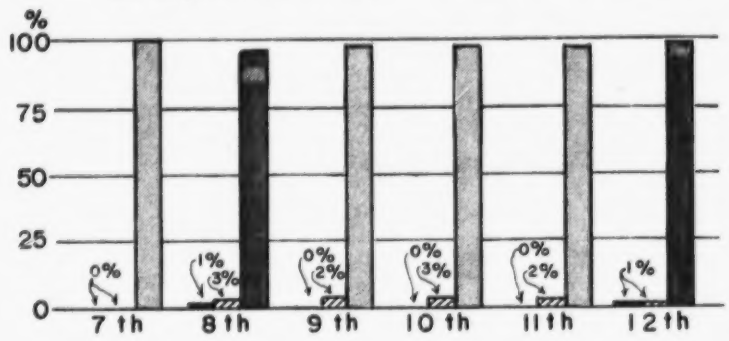
Writing compositions in Latin in class about subjects related to the Latin language or Roman civilization



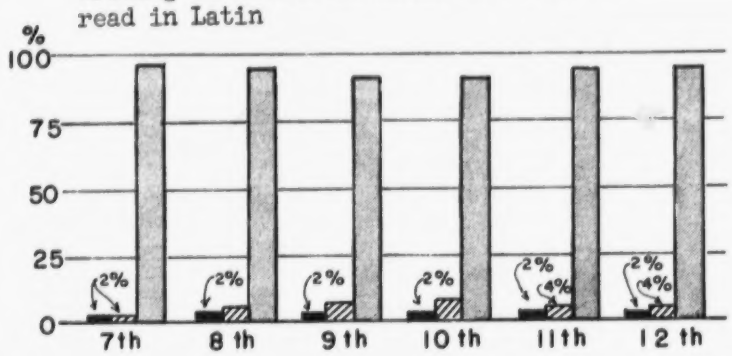
Writing sentences in Latin to illustrate specific points of grammar



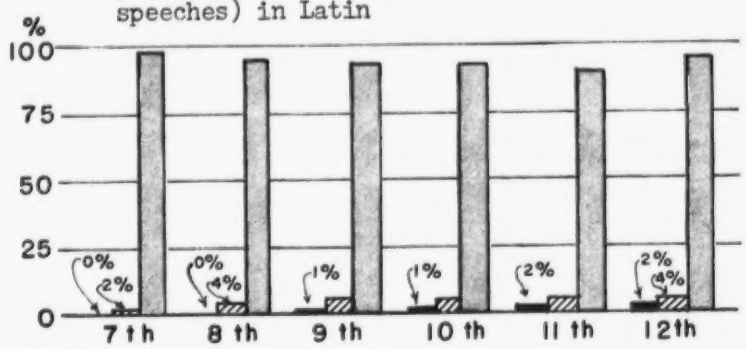
Writing compositions in Latin about subjects related to assigned readings in English or Latin



Writing summaries in Latin of material read in Latin



Writing original compositions (short paragraphs, letters, essays, or speeches) in Latin



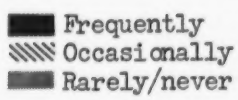
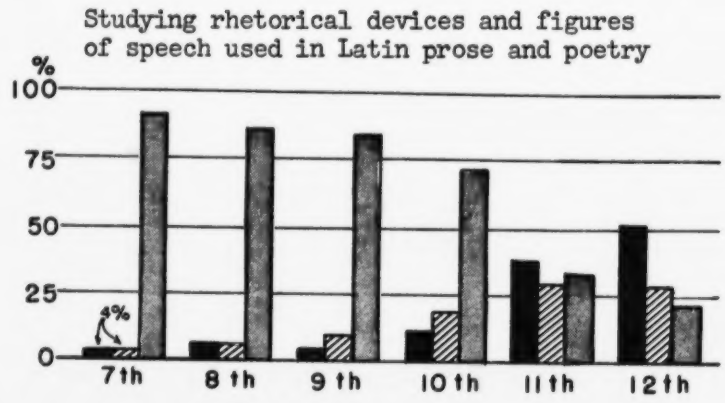


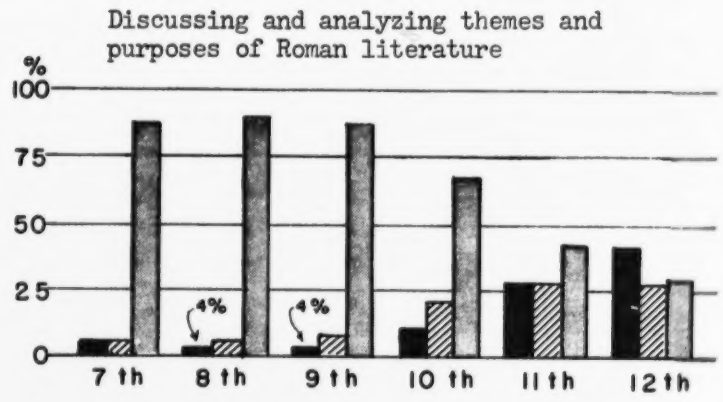
Fig. 7. Writing. Percentages based on subgroup of Latin candidates reporting study at given grade level.

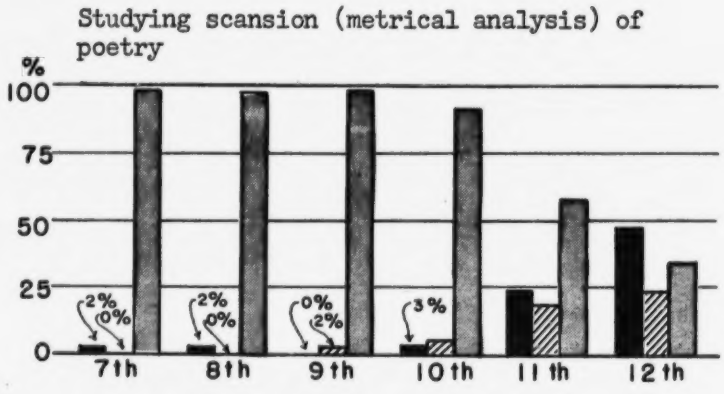
Literature

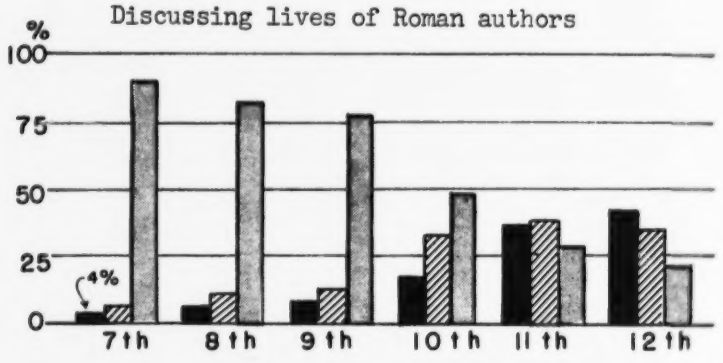
A number of questions sought insight into the techniques and approaches being used to develop students' appreciation of Latin literature. Since the responses were organized by grade level, rather than by years of training, it could not be readily ascertained what percentages of them referred to third or fourth years of study, where the more serious consideration of Latin prose and poetry as literature normally begins. However, although it is difficult to draw detailed conclusions from the data, it was clear that for two-thirds of the candidates who studied Latin in the twelfth grade considerable attention was given to the study of rhetorical devices and metrical analysis, as well as to the discussion of themes and purposes of literary works and the lives and styles of Latin authors. One might easily be led to ask of the remainder of these students, "Quid tu agebas?" One hopes that most would reply that they were still in their second year of study.

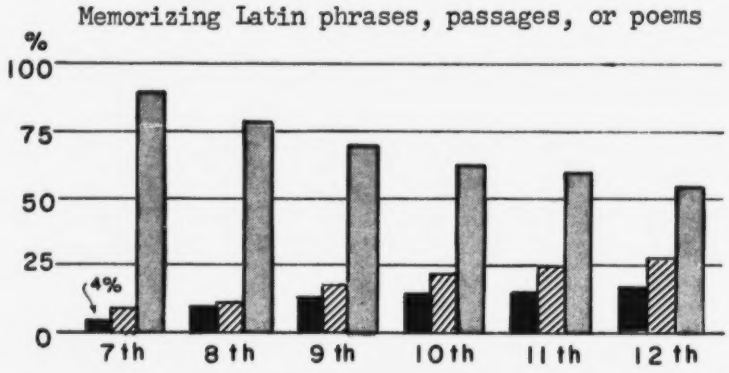
The trend in America toward labeling memorization as inimical to fundamental educational objectives seems to have affected even the Latin classroom. Fewer than half of the students were requested to memorize a phrase, a passage, or a poem more than three or four times a year. The gradual increase in memorization through the successive grades suggested that if a Latin student at random were buttonholed and if he were able to quote some Latin, it would more likely be Vergil than Cicero, and more likely Cicero than Caesar.

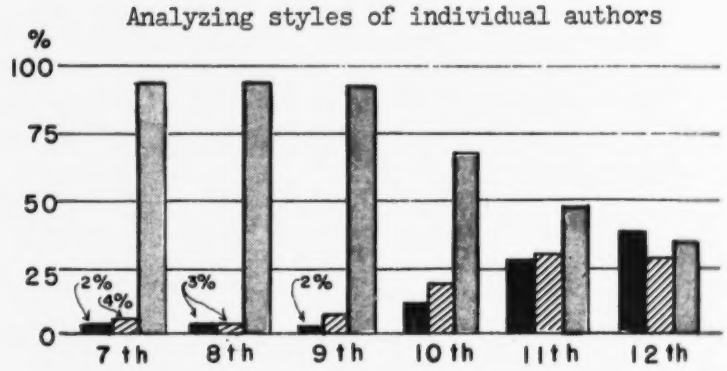












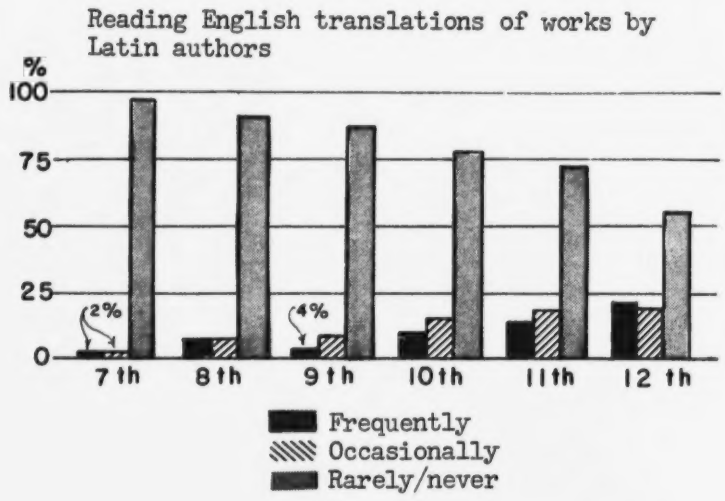


Fig. 8. Literature. Percentages based on subgroup of Latin candidates reporting study at given grade level.

Supplementary Materials and Activities

Although this heading may be considered inappropriate by teachers who consider their use of records, tapes, slides, and other such materials an integral part of their Latin courses, the data nevertheless indicated that for a great majority of the students, any materials or activities beyond the textbook, blackboard, and pencil and paper were still somewhat exceptional.

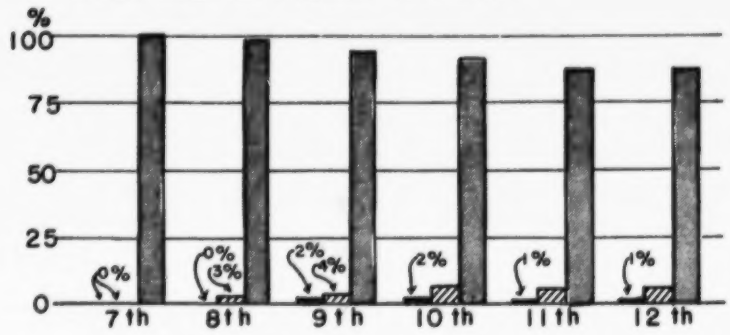
The use of language laboratories, for example, was extremely limited. The percentages of students who participated frequently or even occasionally in oral drills in the language laboratory were virtually insignificant at all grades. The maximum of 5% was reached at grade 8. It is possible that some students may have interpreted the phrase "participating in oral drills" more strictly than was intended and that these percentages were, therefore, slightly deflated.

However, there was little room for ambiguity in the additional question concerning the frequency with which students listened to records or tape recordings in the language laboratory. For grades 7 through 10 over 95% of the students who took Latin at those grades responded that they rarely or never engaged in this activity.

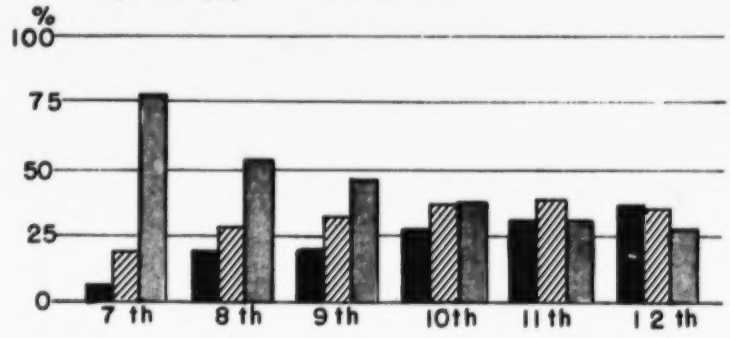
From the related Modern Language Surveys, one may infer that language laboratory facilities were available in the schools attended by at least half of the Latin students. It follows that most Latin teachers, not having command of the spoken language as a major instructional objective, have not yet identified, or not yet implemented, other potentially significant uses for the language laboratory. There may be, of course, an additional factor operating here, namely, crowding of the language laboratory in certain schools has barred consideration of its use by Latin students.

Those who remain skeptical of language laboratories but favor the use of phonographs and tape recorders in the regular classroom may be disheartened by the fact that, at all grades, over 90% of the students indicated that they rarely or never listened to records or tapes in class.

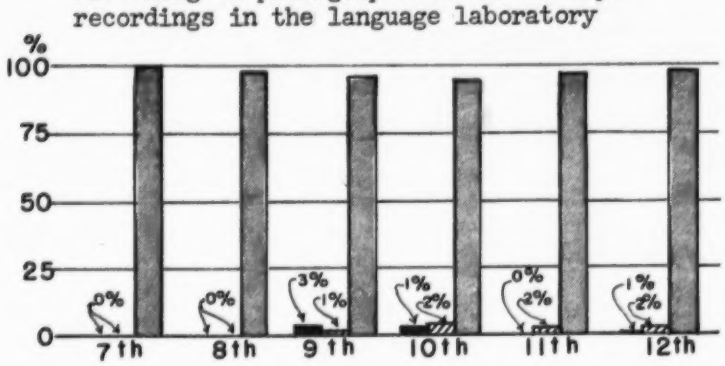
Listening to phonograph records or tape recordings in regular classroom



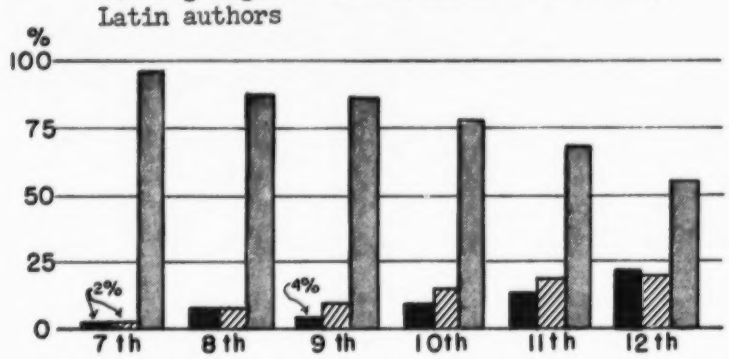
Reading in English about Roman history, mythology, and civilization



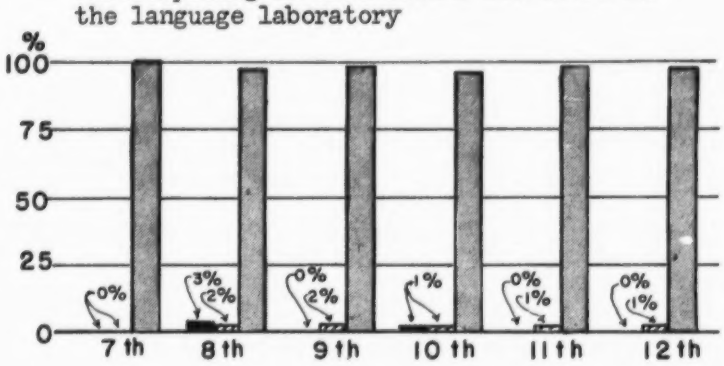
Listening to phonograph records or tape recordings in the language laboratory



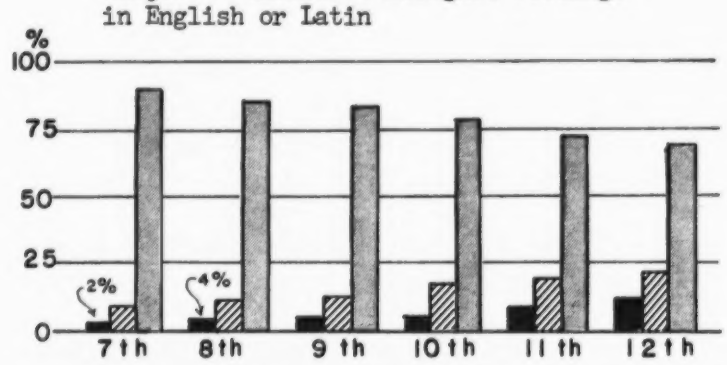
Reading English translations of works by Latin authors



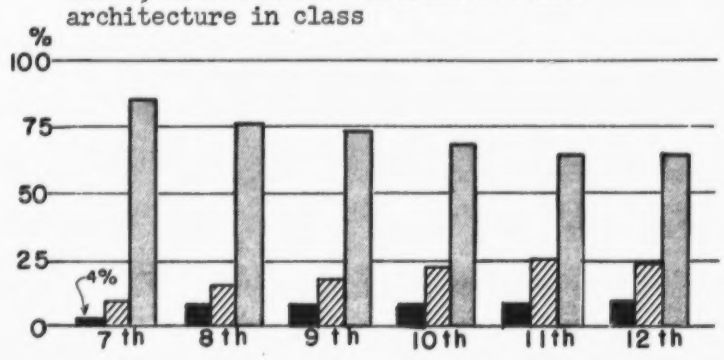
Participating in oral drills conducted in the language laboratory



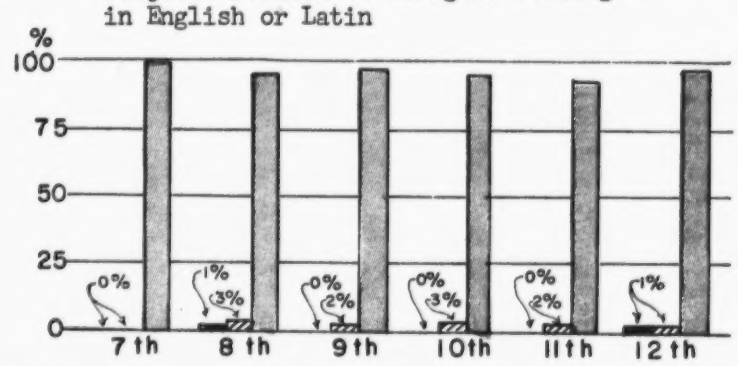
Writing compositions in English about subjects related to assigned readings in English or Latin



Looking at slides, pictures, reproductions, and models of ancient art and architecture in class



Writing compositions in Latin about subjects related to assigned readings in English or Latin



Frequently
Occasionally
Rarely/never

Fig. 9. Supplementary materials and activities. Percentages based on subgroup of Latin candidates reporting study at given grade level.

There was somewhat greater exposure to slides, pictures, and models of ancient art and architecture. But in this area, too, the results of the survey were disappointing. Most schools do have at least limited equipment for these purposes. Moreover, large numbers of visual aids of all types are available, and a comprehensive review of these materials is published annually in The Classical World.[6] Yet approximately two-thirds or more of the students at each grade level indicated that they had rarely or never used such materials, and the proportion that indicated frequent use never exceeded 1 in 10.

A number of additional questions probed other ways in which the students' Latin courses might have been enriched. It was encouraging to note how many of the students indicated frequent or occasional reading in Roman history, mythology, and civilization. From the eighth grade through the twelfth there was reported a steady increase in this respect, more than a third responding that such reading was "frequent" in the twelfth grade and an almost equal proportion indicating "occasional."

One is somewhat at a loss to interpret the responses concerned with reading English translations of works by Latin authors. Does the 23% in the twelfth grade that indicated "frequently," for example, represent a group that read extensively to broaden their backgrounds, or a group who decided to be candid about their use of "trots"?

The relatively infrequent composition work related to assigned reading was almost exclusively in English, as one would expect, with slightly below one-third of the students engaging in such work "occasionally" or "frequently" in the eleventh and twelfth grades.

It may interest some to know the extent to which Latin teachers attempt to impart a Latin flavor to the classroom by giving routine instructions in Latin. The percentage of students who were told in grades 7 through 12, presumably on a regular basis, to "open your books," "close the windows," and so forth, in Latin ranged from 2% to 5%. No more than 15% received such instructions at any grade even occasionally.

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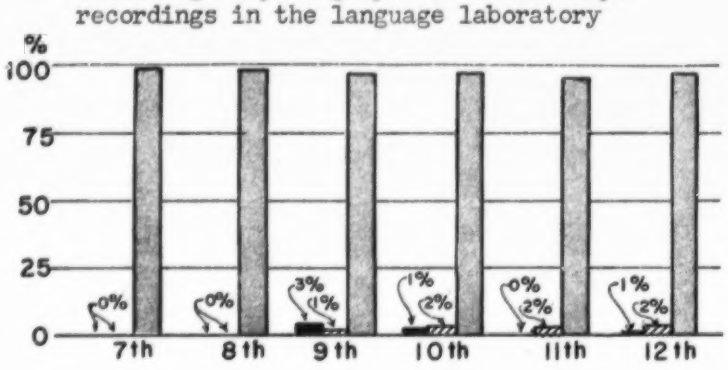
[6] c.f. Seittleman, E. E., "The Audio-Visual World," The Classical World, Vol. 61, No. 1 Sept. 1967, p. 32 and "Classical Filmstrips," The Classical World, Vol. 61, No. 3, Nov. 1967, p. 101.

"Nontraditional" Methodology

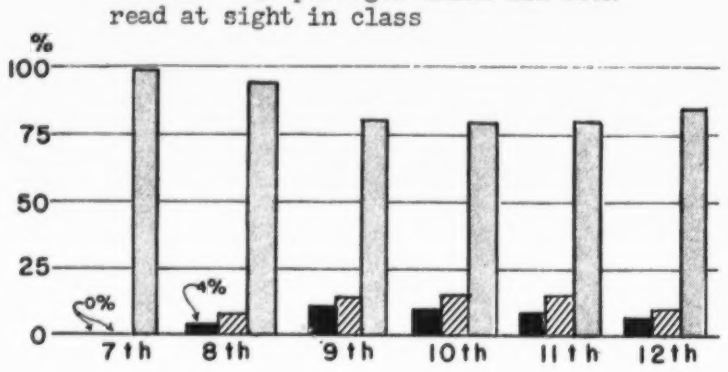
In concluding this section of the report on classroom activities, it seems appropriate to group together for a brief discussion those activities that might loosely be regarded as "nontraditional" in their emphasis on the spoken language or in their use of techniques other than translation to develop reading ability. Many may regard such activities as characteristic of the newer structural approaches to the teaching of Latin, although some of the activities could equally well be termed "traditional" in that they have obviously been conducted in Latin classrooms for centuries. No worthwhile purposes can be served in this report by indulging in value judgments regarding these activities, or even by attempting to clarify whether they are properly labeled as structural. There is, however, some merit in summarizing with graphs the extent to which the Latin students surveyed had participated in these activities in the first half of this decade. Those who may attempt at a later date to trace the effects of the current ferment in Latin teaching methods should find some utility in the figures reported.

In looking over the graphs, one quickly sees that the percentage of students at a given grade level that engaged in any of these activities even occasionally is less than 20% and is usually well below 10%. This may be a sobering fact for those who had envisioned a more rapid and more extensive penetration of certain methodologies into classrooms across the country. On the other hand, the data indicated that even in the early sixties there was a small but significant number of students at each grade level whose teachers gave some emphasis to the spoken language and used some means other than translation to evaluate reading comprehension. One wonders whether their numbers will increase or decrease in the coming years.

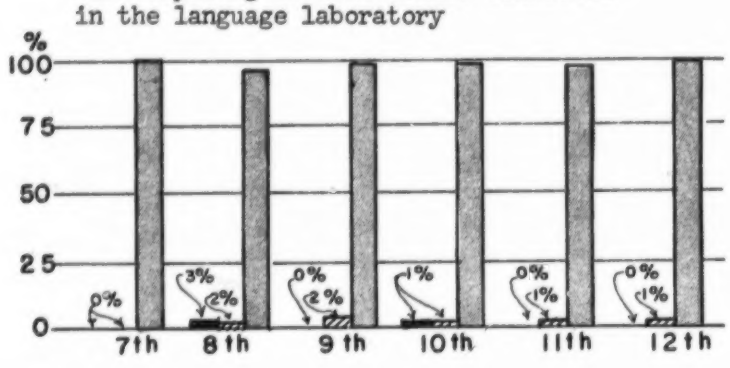
Listening to phonograph records or tape recordings in the language laboratory



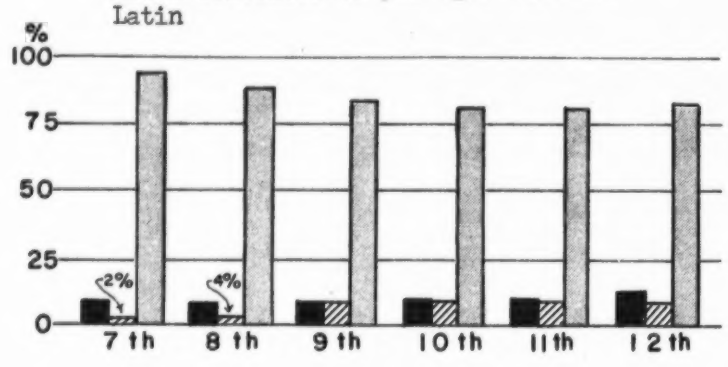
Answering in Latin questions about Latin sentences or passages which had been read at sight in class



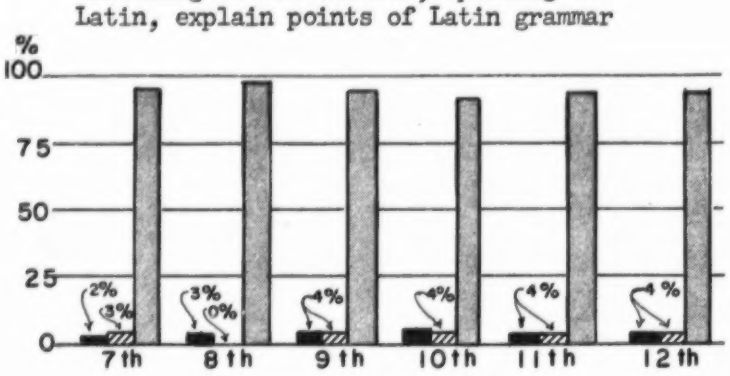
Participating in oral drills conducted in the language laboratory



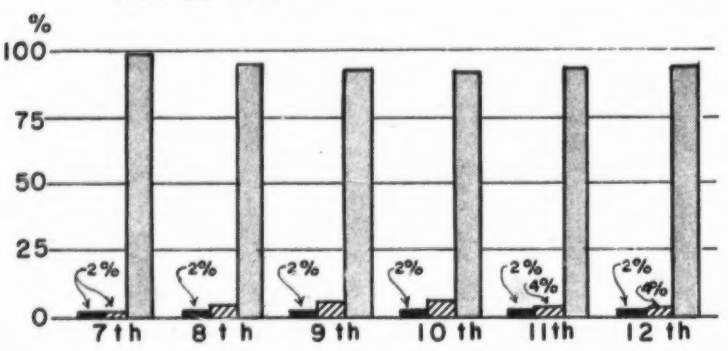
Orally paraphrasing or summarizing in Latin sentences or passages read in Latin



Listening to the teacher, speaking in Latin, explain points of Latin grammar



Writing summaries in Latin of material read in Latin



Listening to the teacher, speaking in Latin, explain the meaning of new Latin words and phrases

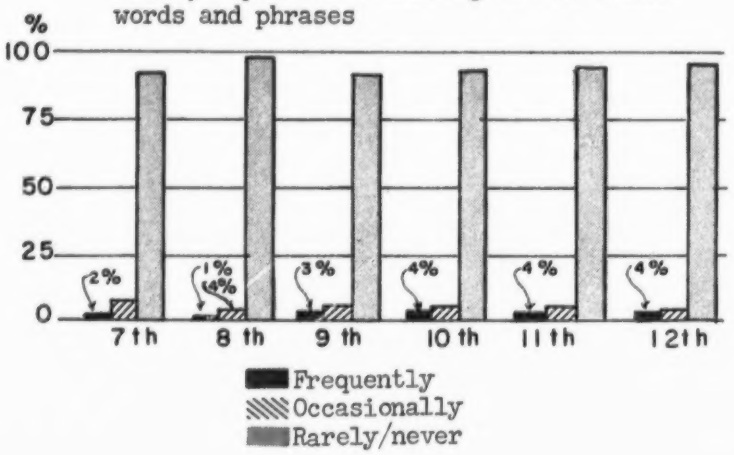


Fig. 10. "Nontraditional" methodology. Percentages based on subgroup of Latin candidates reporting study at given grade level.

Concluding Remarks

It seems advisable, in concluding, to stress the fact that this survey has deliberately focused almost exclusively on the instructional methodologies encountered by a group of College Board Latin candidates. The basic research techniques employed might well be applied sometime in the near future to a companion study that would survey the reading materials and textbooks used by Latin students, as well as perhaps the attitudes students develop toward both the methodology and content of their Latin courses. Comprehensive data in these additional areas might then be integrated with updated information on methodology collected after the current period of experimentation with structural approaches. As a greater fund of objective data is secured for the committees that prepare the College Board Latin Achievement Tests, their task in developing appropriate examinations, unbiased toward any group of students following a particular curriculum or methodology, will be facilitated.

Appendix 1

The classroom activities in their order of appearance in the questionnaire:

1. Listening to Latin read by the teacher
2. Listening to phonograph records or tape recordings in Latin in your regular classroom
3. Listening to phonograph records or tape recordings in Latin in the language laboratory
4. Listening to the teacher, speaking in English, explain points of Latin grammar
5. Listening to the teacher, speaking in Latin, explain points of Latin grammar
6. Listening to the teacher, speaking in English, explain the meaning of new Latin words and phrases
7. Listening to the teacher, speaking in Latin, explain the meaning of new Latin words and phrases
8. Listening to the teacher give directions in Latin pertaining to classroom routine
9. Answering in Latin questions about Latin sentences or passages which had been read at sight in class
10. Answering in Latin questions about Latin sentences or passages which had been assigned as homework
11. Participating in oral drills conducted by the teacher in the classroom
12. Participating in oral drills conducted in the language laboratory
13. Orally paraphrasing or summarizing in Latin sentences or passages read in Latin
14. Reading Latin passages aloud in class
15. Translating aloud from Latin to English from previously assigned work
16. Translating aloud from English to Latin from previously assigned work
17. Translating aloud at sight from Latin to English
18. Translating aloud at sight from English to Latin
19. Translating from Latin to English at sight in written tests
20. Translating from English to Latin at sight in written tests
21. Translating in writing from Latin to English in homework assignments
22. Translating in writing from English to Latin in homework assignments

23. Writing sentences in Latin to illustrate specific points of grammar

24. Writing summaries in Latin of material read in Latin

25. Writing in Latin answers to questions in Latin on tests

26. Writing compositions in Latin in class about subjects related to the Latin language or Roman civilization

27. Memorizing lists of Latin words with their definitions or synonyms given in English

28. Memorizing lists of Latin words with their definitions or synonyms given in Latin

29. Memorizing declensions and conjugations

30. Memorizing rules of grammar

31. Memorizing Latin phrases, passages, or poems

32. Studying rhetorical devices and figures of speech used in Latin prose and poetry

33. Studying scansion (metrical analysis) of poetry

34. Studying the derivation of English words from their Latin roots

35. Looking at slides, pictures, reproductions, and models of ancient art and architecture in class

36. Reading in English about Roman history, mythology, and civilization

37. Reading English translations of works by Latin authors

38. Writing compositions in English about subjects related to assigned readings in English or Latin

39. Writing compositions in Latin about subjects related to assigned readings in English or Latin

40. Writing original compositions (short paragraphs, letters, essays, or speeches) in Latin

41. Discussing lives of Roman authors

42. Discussing and analyzing themes and purposes of Roman literature

43. Analyzing styles of individual authors

Appendix 2
Description of Design and Administration of Survey

Sampling Plan

The sampling frame for this survey included all students who had taken College Board achievement tests in December 1965, January 1966, and March 1966 and juniors who had taken these tests in May 1966. College and postgraduate students and students attending high schools located in areas other than the 50 states were excluded.

Samples of equal size were drawn for all tests within an administration. The sampling procedure based the selection of students on the last three digits of the student registration number, the assumption being that these digits are randomly distributed. However, because no student was to be included in more than one sample within an administration, the selection method was not strictly random. The few students who happened to be drawn for two samples were excluded from the sample for the more popular test.

Nine hundred and seventy-five cases were selected in each subject from each of three administrations (December, January, and May) and 675 cases from the March administration. Since duplication could occur across administrations, the students were requested to complete only the first questionnaire received. The total n was approximately 38,000 students from 50 states and 7,555 high schools. The sample size for each subject is given in the first column of the Response Summary. Whenever the data from samples from several administrations or samples from different tests within an administration were combined for presentation in one of these reports, the responses were weighted in proportion to the total population that they represented.

Description of the Questionnaires

Each of the 10 questionnaires used in this survey had three parts. Part I described general course work in grades 9 through 12 in seven general areas: English, mathematics, history and social studies (including social sciences), foreign languages (modern and classical), science, art and music, and practical arts. Part II provided detailed information on the specific courses taken by the student in one of five general areas (area dependent upon the test for which the

student was selected). Part III focused primarily on either course content or methodology in the subject in which the student took a College Board achievement test.

Testing specialists from Educational Testing Service, working with committees of examiners in each subject, formulated the questionnaires and assisted in planning the analysis. The following kinds of questions were included in Part III.

(1) Questions that sought to determine the extent to which new topics or emphases were being introduced or old topics and emphases were being dropped.

(2) Questions designed to identify subgroups of students whose preparation deviated systematically from all other subgroups or from the general group.

(3) Questions that would yield evidence of the variability in breadth and depth of subject-matter coverage.

(4) Questions that would reveal variability in elements or aspects of the curriculum not necessarily related to secondary school curriculum-reform movements. These included questions based on presumably stable portions of the curriculum which not only would serve as additional evidence of construct validity but also would provide a means for tracing curricular change in the future.

(5) Questions that would provide a check on the reliability and validity of candidates' responses. These included somewhat differently worded questions bearing on the same topic as well as questions geared to different levels of specificity or generality.

The instructions for answering the questions in Part III generally were related to when students took specific tests. In most cases, if they took the test in December or January, they were to report on what they had studied in that subject through the fall (or first semester) of the 1965-66 academic year; if they took the test in March, they were to report on what they had studied up to the time they took the test; if they took the test in May, they were to report on what they had studied as of the end of the 1965-66 academic year, which, in this case, was the end of the junior year. However, for languages, because the emphasis was on methodology rather than content, students reported only for the grades in high

school in which they had studied the language for at least one semester.

Administration of the Questionnaires

Each questionnaire was accompanied by a letter of invitation that emphasized the need for accurate information and urged students to seek their teachers' assistance wherever necessary. The mailing addresses were those provided by the students on their registration forms. In most cases, these were the students' home addresses. A code number consisting of six digits was preprinted on each Part I answer sheet. The first digit identified questionnaire part (Part I, II, or III), the second digit identified subject, and the last four digits identified the student.

Access to a special tape was a convenient means for obtaining information, such as test scores (including scores on all achievement tests and on the SAT), high school, and, in some instances, background information on candidate preparation in the subject in which he took the test. It also provided a system for informing principals which students in their schools received questionnaires and which students had not returned completed forms.

Response to the Survey

The excellent cooperation of both students and principals resulted in returns from three-fourths of the candidates contacted. However, about 5% of the returns, for one reason or another, were not usable. As noted on the following page, these responses vary--from a low of 60% for those who took the American history and European history tests to a high of 75% for those who took the French and physics tests.

In addition, many letters were received from students, teachers, and administrators indicating their appreciation of the fact that the College Entrance Examination Board wanted to prepare tests that reflected the school preparation of the students who took them. Thus, students would be assured an equal opportunity of showing on the tests what they had learned even though their school programs varied.

Response Summary

Figures include juniors tested in May 1966 as well as seniors tested in December, January, and March administrations of the academic year 1965-66.

Test	Number contacted	Number of usable returns	Percent response
English	3,474	2,313	67%
American history European history	5,137	3,079	60
French	3,486	2,600	75
German	3,487	2,579	74
Spanish	3,452	2,447	71
Latin	3,540	2,595	73
Mathematics level I Mathematics level II	5,448	3,769	69
Biology	3,379	2,275	67
Chemistry	3,338	2,458	74
Physics	3,373	2,513	75
Totals	38,114	26,628	70%

Additional Comments

It is important to note that the students submitting data for these reports represent an atypical group of prospective college students. Compared with a national sample of college entrants, in College Board Score Reports, ... 1968-69, p.25, they rank close to the 75th percentile on the Scholastic Aptitude Test in both verbal and mathematical scores.

It is not too surprising to find that this is an extremely able group because, other things being equal, colleges that use achievement tests put emphasis on the ability and preparation of their students. For example, it is interesting to note that of the 177 colleges and universities described by Cass and Birnbaum (Comparative Guide to American Colleges) as most selective, highly selective, or very selective, 130 of them required College Board achievement tests for admission in September 1966.